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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 13 May 1992, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland)

later: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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Annual report of the Administrator for 1991 and priority areas identified therein (high-level segment) (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR 1991 AND PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED THEREIN (high-level segment) (agenda item 2) (continued) (DP/1992/12 and Add.1 and 2 and 4-6)

1. Mr. DE GROOT (United Nations Industrial Development Organization) said that industrial development could and should make an essential contribution to the alleviation of poverty, for which sound economic growth was the only long-term solution. Industry produced the inputs needed to increase agricultural productivity and provided a market for many agricultural products. It also included small-scale industry, which enabled individuals to produce low-cost products and provided opportunities and gainful employment for both urban and rural people. Small-scale industries also provided unique opportunities for women to realize their potential and contribute to family incomes.

2. Though UNIDO was fully aware of the potential risks that industrial development posed to the environment, it was also conscious of industry's essential role in an overall strategy for sustainable development. Any response to the environmental challenge, therefore, would have to combine relevant policy advice, technical assistance and the promotion of investment, an approach which had emerged from the Conference on Ecologically Sustainable Industrial Development held at Copenhagen in 1991. UNIDO hoped that the same approach would be recognized at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). At UNCED itself, "Agenda 21" would contain many issues which would have to be translated into concrete action by the industrial sector, and would require extensive coordination by all concerned.

3. UNIDO endorsed the view that any restructuring of the United Nations system should concentrate on areas of competitive advantage. While it had initially been argued that that implied specialization by each organization in one function only, it had eventually become clear that the unique advantage and essential strength of the United Nations system lay in the combination of those functions, and in its orchestration both of objective policy analysis and advice, and of the many inputs and contributions required from within and without the system, combined with its own technical expertise.

4. UNIDO's aim was to integrate its operational activities to a higher degree than ever before with its other mandates and particularly with those related to industrial sector and subsector policy analysis and advice, investment promotion, and technology development, information and promotion. That would greatly enhance the quality, relevance and sustainability of its operational activities and would also strengthen the quality, relevance and delivery of its other activities.

5. In the light of those considerations, UNIDO was concerned at the increased tendency in UNDP to use a non-technical in-house service to carry out such activities. That was hardly an area of competitive advantage for the United Nations system.

6. For UNIDO, the programme approach was an essential tool for integrating functions in response to the specific development priorities in the industrial sector set by the Member States. It had been working on that issue since 1988 and was currently contributing the experience it had gained to the joint UNDP-agency efforts to issue appropriate guidelines to all partners as soon as possible. These guidelines were expected to define what constituted a programme approach and how it should be applied.

7. The further integration of field offices under a United Nations system resident coordinator, selected by and responsible to the Secretary-General, with a system-wide perspective, was a major step forward towards strengthening coordination at the field level, and was essential to an optimal programming and resource-allocation process. The process was also expected to increase in importance as the programme approach was more widely applied.

8. In UNIDO's experience, the activities identified through the programming process usually required the involvement of two or three sectors and, hence, two or three United Nations agencies. To achieve coordination at that level, the concept of a lead agency with two or three collaborating agencies appeared to be the most appropriate approach. Thus, while welcoming the concept of a single United Nations country office with a single coordinator, UNIDO felt that the initial description offered by the Administrator somewhat neglected the specialized agencies, which, with their wide range of technical-cooperation programmes funded from their regular budgets, should not be overlooked.

9. Although, therefore, intensive cooperation and coordination at the field level were important, the effective integration of activities other than operational activities into actual programmes, would require the close involvement of the respective agency headquarters. Only in that way could the various functions be brought to bear effectively on the activities undertaken. In achieving that effective blending and efficient field-level coordination, UNIDO's country directors' programme could play a significant role.

10. UNIDO's country directors were fully integrated into the field offices, both physically and operationally. The UNDP resident coordinator was the formal representative of UNIDO and was advised by its country director. As things stood, UNIDO was seriously concerned that the funding of that arrangement was in danger. Maintaining the existing number of some 32 posts, not to mention reaching the required number of 50, established jointly with UNDP, would not be possible under the current funding structure, since the sources of funding were UNDP sectoral support, UNIDO support cost income and special purpose contributions. The only option left open to UNIDO was to draw upon its regular budget, an option that would require a decision by its Member States.

11. UNIDO noted with interest that the United Nations system envisaged increasing its presence in the Commonwealth of Independent States and in Eastern Europe. Given the finite nature of the resources available to the system, the need for a common presence in those States was all the more necessary. UNIDO was willing to place at the disposal of the United Nations

system its industrial cooperation centre in Moscow and its investment promotion office in Warsaw, on the understanding that the United Nations agencies would act in concert and not in competition with each other.

12. Lastly, on the issues of national execution and the successor arrangements for agency support costs, close and intensive cooperation between UNDP and the five agencies had produced detailed guidelines for the application of the decisions taken by the Governing Council in 1991. However, UNIDO was deeply concerned at the slow start made in applying those decisions, a delay that was directly attributable to the complexity of the new arrangements and compounded by the absence of effective training. The extent of the problem was demonstrated by the fact that a project had yet to be designed and approved according to the new system. Not one single project had reached that critical stage, and there had consequently been a dramatic drop in the approval of new projects. Given the major implications for all the agencies, he urged that all parties give immediate attention to the problem, in order to obviate a delivery crisis and ensure that the purpose of the changes was ultimately achieved.

13. Mr. KIM (Observer for the Republic of Korea) said that the international community was entering a period characterized by new-found optimism that the world's persistent economic and political problems could be solved through international cooperation. The only way in which a genuine and lasting peace could be assured worldwide was to give top priority to outstanding developmental issues, with a view to sustainable human development in the developing countries.

14. The poor results of the 1980s, commonly referred to as the lost development decade, had continued into the 1990s. Growth was almost non-existent and per capita GDP had actually fallen in 1990/91. UNDP's role, therefore, as both the central funding agency and the coordinator of technical assistance in the United Nations system, could not be overemphasized.

15. The Human Development Report 1992, which concentrated on the international dimensions of human development, was encouraging, as was its message that the international community should ensure adequate cooperation and assistance to stimulate the growth necessary for people in all countries to realize their potential. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the Report had refined the human development index, and hoped that its conceptual framework could be further elaborated to avoid divisions among the Member States.

16. Turning more specifically to the Administrator's report, he said that UNDP was to be commended on its perseverence and determination in introducing the new orientations for technical cooperation. In that connection, it was highly encouraging that "programme" was henceforth to mean national or regional programmes, rather than those introduced by donors. That distinction demonstrated UNDP's clear understanding of the relevance of the recipients' needs and opinions, particularly in the area of technical cooperation.

17. As far as the concept of national execution was concerned, the increased cooperation between funding institutions such as UNDP and the recipient countries should gain further momentum. A certain amount of delegated

authority and decision-making capacity should thus be transferred to the national Governments, to enhance their capacity-building. However, such delegation of authority and decision-making should also extend beyond Governments to the areas and communities directly involved in UNDP activities. As the UNDP-IBRD water and sanitation programme had shown, such participation could ensure that project and programme funds were put to optimum use in meeting the needs of the recipient countries.

18. National execution would not succeed, however, if recipient countries lacked the fundamental prerequisite of national management capacity. UNDP could assist in providing and promoting such capacity. Moreover, the central role of technology in determining growth required a solution to the ongoing issue of technology transfer. UNDP's role as a disseminator of technology-related information deserved the support of all countries, and should be further enhanced.

19. During UNDP's fifth programming cycle, the Republic of Korea would graduate to net contributor status. That transition marked an important milestone in his country's cooperation with UNDP. In addition, the Republic of Korea would become a member of the Governing Council in 1993. He consequently wished to reaffirm his Government's commitment to cooperating fully with UNDP and actively participating in its activities.

20. Global problems such as environmental degradation, AIDS, population pressures and drug abuse were a threat to social and economic development. In the forthcoming cycle, his Government looked forward to the implementation of more intercountry programmes under the guidance of UNDP. Although country programmes currently absorbed the major proportion of UNDP's resources, regional, interregional and global programmes were an increasingly relevant and effective means of promoting the objective of world development. His Government strongly supported UNDP's activities in Asia and the Pacific, and intended to participate actively in UNDP-supported projects in the region.

21. Mr. ALANIZ (Nicaragua) said that the President and Administrator were to be commended on their stimulating introductory statements, which had prepared the ground for a substantive dialogue in the Governing Council on the central issue of the reform of UNDP.

22. His delegation welcomed the growing importance attached to the conceptual and practical aspects of subjects such as the programme approach, national execution, successor arrangements for agency support costs, policy assessment, discussion with countries on the strategic aspects of their development and the focus on human development.

23. It attached particular importance to examining in greater detail the principles governing cooperation between UNDP and its member countries, such as the sustainable nature of activities in terms of their institutional, technical, economic, financial, social, cultural and environmental aspects; national ownership, management and control of programmes and projects; accounting in terms of both results and cooperation impact, and the financial aspect and, lastly, the strengthening of system response capacity through more flexible modalities defined by means of the programme approach.

24. In view of the importance of the programme approach to developing countries, efforts should be made to overcome the drawbacks, due largely to the risk of national institutions becoming over-dependent on certain donors in the long term and of resources being inadequately used unless programmes were consistent with national priorities and objectives.

25. His Government supported the Administrator's proposal for a single office of the United Nations system in each country and those regarding decentralization, coordination, and headquarters support for all the agencies using the single office, and for a clear definition of functions and mandate to avoid overlap.

26. It also endorsed the proposal to establish a high-level committee to coordinate United Nations operational and humanitarian activities and for separate executive mechanisms responsible to the high-level committee.

27. In 1991, his delegation had supported the Danish proposal to set up an international development council linked to the activities of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and IFAD. His delegation had also supported the Swedish proposal at the General Assembly for a high-level forum to discuss development issues, possibly leading to the establishment of an international council for development or a reformed Economic and Social Council. The two possibilities were not mutually exclusive, and it should be possible to find a balance between them which would afford better levels of communication, dialogue and effectiveness. His delegation supported the Administrator's proposals on staffing policies and appropriate and predictable sources of funds. All those matters should be considered at the next session of the Economic and Social Council.

28. In connection with the report on technical-cooperation activities (DP/1992/36), his delegation agreed with the Administrator that consideration by the Council of the issue of closer cooperation should be postponed for the time being.

29. The proposal by the Government of Germany, with its important financial implications, was of great interest and should be examined in the context of the reform already under way in the economic and social sectors of the Organization, the Administrator's ideas and the proposal by the Nordic countries. Delegations should take a realistic approach while, at the same time, bearing in mind the non-financial implications of that initiative, particularly with regard to coordination within a single United Nations cooperation system.

30. His delegation welcomed UNDP's efforts to ensure greater democratization throughout the world, the proposal to establish a trust fund for South Africa and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, as a follow-up to the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD). That was an extremely complex task which required the support of all Member States. In that connection, Japan's initiative to host an African summit in 1993 deserved wide support.

31. It was regrettable that the Administrator had made no mention in his report or introductory statement of the need for cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean and the way in which that was being met at the regional level.

32. His Government agreed unreservedly with the importance attached to human development in UNDP. It also accepted the suggestions and comments on freedom in the annual reports, but it should be borne in mind that any attempt at quantification in that area would be extremely difficult.

33. The Human Development Report 1992 emphasized the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and the inadequacies of world markets in promoting the efforts of the developing countries. Such inadequacies arose not only from protectionism and restrictions on migration but also from the need to link "global efficiency" with "global equity" as a basis for substantive changes in official development assistance.

34. In the light of these concerns, it was essential that there should be an understanding between the industrialized and the developing countries in tackling global problems, based on the idea that human development was the responsibility of all countries. In the meantime, the immediate task was to draw up a common agenda for the short and medium terms.

35. His delegation welcomed the report on UNDP's activities in relation to the environment and development and looked forward to the outcome of the Rio de Janeiro Conference, particularly with regard to the strengthening of national capacity.

36. In connection with UNFPA, the formulation and implementation of population policies should be consistent with general development policies, fundamental human rights and the responsibilities of individuals, couples and families.

37. As for UNV, his delegation supported any action that would help to organize local communities to enable them to assume responsibility, particularly in such important sectors as health and the environment.

38. Mr. LING (Observer for Belarus) said that the age was one of sudden and profound political changes, which had undermined the economic and social structure of large numbers of countries throughout the world. That was the background against which UNDP was called on to provide wide-ranging assistance to enable the countries concerned to adapt to the new economic circumstances and to implement the transition to a market economy.

39. The change-over to a market economy in his own country was being undertaken in an atmosphere of severe economic crisis, which had been further exacerbated by the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster in April 1986. The success of any structural reform would depend not only on a combination of political will, government resolution and a patient attitude by the population, but also on substantial external support from and cooperation with bilateral sources and international economic and financial institutions.

40. The Governing Council had, in keeping with the universality principle, just allocated recipient status (IPF) to Belarus, thus enabling his country to take advantage of UNDP's valuable experience and know-how and its unique history of cooperation with both recipient and donor countries.

41. His country had to resolve a whole series of problems in connection with the change-over in industry and agriculture, restructuring of the economy and the need to enhance its export potential, the training of staff, conversion procedures, the environment, social policy and health. In the interests of effective cooperation, his Government was prepared to form joint working groups which would act at all stages with the participation of UNDP. It also hoped that other countries in the region would cooperate in such measures.

42. His delegation fully accepted that the implementation of the Governing Council's decision to allocate recipient status to Belarus should not divert resources from the traditional developing countries. The establishment of a special fund might be an appropriate solution. His Government fully supported the efforts of UNDP to ensure maximum economies during the implementation of technical assistance projects to Belarus by, for example, securing additional financing from other governmental and non-governmental sources and reducing the transition period to a minimum.

43. Technical assistance from UNDP would be particularly effective as a means of supplementing and enhancing multilateral and bilateral international assistance to Belarus during its conversion to a market economy. Particular importance was attached by his Government to the "physical" presence of UNDP in recipient countries, which provided backup for the implementation of cooperative programmes. In that connection, it welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to establish interim United Nations/UNDP offices in Belarus and the other CIS countries. Such a measure was essential since Belarus had no practical experience of the complex sphere of cooperative technical assistance and because the more wide-ranging programmes and projects would have to be planned under UNDP auspices, since they would necessitate the investment of significant funds from alternative sources, which could only be mobilized by joint efforts.

44. His Government would render all possible assistance by providing suitable premises for the UN/UNDP interim office and examining ways of covering the local expenses incurred by the office, including the payment of local staff and the provision of communication facilities. In the near future, a technical cooperation division would be established, which would be concerned with planning matters, the implementation of technical assistance programmes and coordination of the activities of government departments, organizations and private companies.

45. Mr. STAFFORD (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that there was general agreement that the world had reached a political watershed in terms not only of a new world order but also of institutional identities. It was, in any event, a time for identifying new and more effective ways of working together towards common goals. The High Commissioner welcomed the call for a new response, in particular in that critical area which was sometimes called the development gap.

46. The "development gap" was the gaping hole that existed between humanitarian assistance and long-term development. As the international agency for refugees, UNHCR faced the development gap both from the point of view of the causes of refugee flows and from that of solutions for refugees.

47. Since its establishment in 1951, UNHCR had seen growing complexity in the reasons why people left home in both refugee and migratory movements. Few of the millions of people on the move had moved simply because of political persecution. Rather they were influenced by a combination of political, economic and environmental factors which worked either towards progress and stability or towards deterioration and chaos.

48. In some places, the chaos spanned borders: as a result of constant border crossings, a person might one day be a refugee, the next a returnee and the third an internally displaced person. As a result, all meaningful definitions broke down.

49. The High Commissioner had made the prevention of refugee flows, in the sense of mitigating their causes, one of the key directions of her Office but, unless the root causes were forcefully addressed, humanitarianism alone would not solve the problem of the refugees and the internally displaced. Furthermore, the vast majority of refugees were received by countries which were themselves incredibly poor and insecure. In such cases, UNHCR had found that, in order to avoid creating a privileged class, the host communities had to be assisted also, their needs being as compelling as those of the refugees.

50. In most cases, refugees were repatriated to countries devastated by years of warfare, and political and economic instability. People returned to communities with no infrastructure or security, no job opportunities, no education and no health services, and which were often littered with mines, crowded with internally displaced persons and where firearms were omnipresent. Many of the returnees had been in exile for a decade or more. They had had no schooling and no training in food production. Over 70 per cent of them were women and children.

51. Traditionally, UNHCR offered repatriation assistance to those people in the form of transport, food and water for the journey, temporary shelter, blankets, tools and seeds. Although that usually took the form of individual assistance, it was sometimes offered to communities with a concentration of returnees. The question arose however as to the way in which people returning to such communities could restart their lives with such minimal resources. That was where the development gap arose. It was the lack of what might be called "essential development": the basic requirements for a person to be able to remain in place or rebuild a life, for a community to absorb a refugee influx or receive a group of people returning home.

52. "Essential development" provided a community with water, food, income-generating opportunities, basic health services, basic education and basic security. Though not a development agency, UNHCR had been compelled to implement essential development in some of its programmes, as a prerequisite for their viability and durability.

53. Essential development was being implemented among African refugees receiving asylum in west Africa and Latin American refugees returning home in Central America. In order to assist the refugees in west Africa, UNHCR had also assisted the communities in which they lived by grading roads, digging boreholes, setting up health posts, training midwives, and refurbishing local schools. The projects were modest ones, but they allowed the host communities to keep going, made the refugees self-sufficient and provided skills which would be crucial on their return home. Furthermore, by remaining in place after the refugees' repatriation, such projects helped provide some sort of stability, so that the communities concerned were less vulnerable to dislocation in the future.

54. In Latin America, CIREFCA had been implementing quick impact projects (QUIPS), costing some $40,000 each. Those microprojects could be fitted coherently into a Government's national development plan and were flexibly tailored to particular communities or vulnerable groups. They covered a wide range of vital community needs and were most effective when decision-making and control were exercised at the local level.

55. Such projects filled the development gap between humanitarian assistance and long-term development. There was, however, no overall institutional framework or policy directive for such an approach. Implementation had to be faster and a more creative use made of implementing partners. Delay periods of up to 21 months between project submission and implementation were unacceptable for essential development projects.

56. United Nations agencies and bilateral partners had to learn to work more closely with community resources, especially local government agencies and NGOs. Where local government did not have the necessary resources, UNHCR often had to provide strong support during the initial phase in terms of advise, logistics and infrastructure, but government agencies soon learned to function independently.

57. Where resources were insufficient to meet a multitude of competing demands, donors had to set appropriate priorities. UNHCR's normal practice was to tap a wide variety of funding sources, particularly voluntary funds, but other sources were currently being explored.

58. There had been many successful joint UNDP/UNHCR programmes, as reported in the document UNDP humanitarian programme: report on activities undertaken during 1991 (DP/1992/19), but the goal of integrating relief assistance to all categories of refugees into wider development initiatives necessitated a proper institutional framework. In the CIREFCA process, UNHCR would shortly be handing over to UNDP as the lead agency, while in Cambodia, a framework was already available for similar coordination. In the next few years, there would be many other similar challenges which would test the effectiveness of the system to respond to a crisis, to solve that crisis and to keep it solved.

59. Mr. DICHEV (Bulgaria) said that recent developments in the world had faced the United Nations with enormous challenges. The Organization could

certainly not abdicate its role in development, but only a comprehensive and coordinated approach would enable the dramatically increasing demand for assistance to be tackled effectively.

60. His delegation endorsed the Administrator's call for a more effective incorporation of technical-cooperation activities into the national development efforts of the developing countries and the emphasis placed on the principle of the primary responsibility of recipient Governments for effective programme implementation. The strengthening of national capacities in the planning, designing, implementing and evaluating of technical-cooperation programmes was an indispensable prerequisite for the national execution of projects and programmes. That should not, however, preclude the utilization of the viable experience, knowledge and expertise of the United Nations specialized agencies and regional commissions. He was concerned about the complexity of the new arrangements for successor support costs, which could impose a substantial administrative burden on recipient Governments and should be simplified.

61. The pace of social and economic changes had increased enormously in the past decade, during which global integration and the speed of scientific and technological advances had necessitated a greater flexibility in programming technical cooperation. The more complex the objectives, the more flexible management had to be in order to achieve them. The current situation in Central and Eastern Europe was very daunting. The universality principle required that all countries eligible for development aid should receive it, but UNDP's main effort should still be focused on the least developed countries.

62. The pace and the success of transition itself in the Central and East European countries, CIS and the Baltic States was largely governed by the availability of external assistance. UNDP would have to rethink its policy, accepting that the transformation under way in those countries had already become an issue of global importance. Many negative factors, both internal and external, had combined to produce a climate unfavourable to the transition. In Bulgaria, for example, there had been a serious decline in industrial output during 1991, a catastrophic fall in foreign trade turnover with its traditional partners and a reduction in meat production, while unemployment had reached 10 per cent of the labour force and continued to grow. Similar and even worse difficulties were being experienced by other countries in transition. It was to be hoped, therefore, that the re-establishment of a UNDP operational regional office in Europe would have a positive effect on programme management and efficiency.

63. Mr. ADOUKI (Congo) said that the world was facing a number of formidable challenges, such as increasing poverty, third-world indebtedness, the AIDS pandemic and natural disasters, in part caused by the population explosion which was ushering in the new century. There was no doubt that UNDP had an important part to play in assisting the international community to meet such challenges, especially those facing the developing countries. In that connection the principle of universality had acquired unprecedented importance as a means of meeting the basic needs of the human race and promoting simultaneously the dignity and rights of man and the economic and social well-being of all peoples.

64. His delegation endorsed the Administrator's expressions of hope and optimism and also the emphasis placed on the urgent need to redouble the efforts made to assist Africa. He had noted with particular satisfaction the new programme approach and the added importance of field missions. UNDP assistance to Africa was closely linked with the support to be provided by the international community for the implementation of the new United Nations Agenda for African Development in the 1990s. Any reduction in the resources allocated would place the economies of countries in transition to a market economy on the continent of Africa in a very difficult position. Full support by the Governing Council would help to dissipate the fears expressed by the African planning ministers at their recent Annual Conference.

65. There were a number of questions and differences of interpretation with regard to the Human Development Report 1992, and some speakers obviously had difficulty in accepting certain parts of it. Some delegations also felt that it dealt with too many questions which were outside UNDP's mandate. He reserved the right to make further comments on the matter after a thorough examination of the report.

66. Mr. MOHAMED (Observer for the Sudan) said that UNDP had a major part to play in promoting the self-sufficiency of the developing countries. Countries which had already made reasonable efforts to mobilize national resources merited special assistance from the international community. At the same time, the cultural and social situation of developing countries had to be taken into account if genuine results were to be achieved and it was also necessary to rationalize and coordinate UNDP's efforts, so as to ensure that the assistance rendered was compatible with development plans in the developing countries.

67. It was to be hoped that UNDP would be in a position to increase the scale of technical assistance in 1992, concentrating in particular on the plight of the LDCs. Top priority should be given to building up national and institutional structures, with emphasis on the private sector and on the provision of expert advice. At the same time, careful supervision should be exercised over UNDP-financed technical assistance programmes executed by other agencies. The paramount requirement was, however, for an increased overall flow of funds to the developing countries. Otherwise all development efforts would end in failure, thus fuelling greater economic and political instability, which would cost more in the long run.

68. It was essential that UNDP should react positively to the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) by providing aid for developing country programmes which would attack poverty and environmental degradation; the latter being one of the prime indicators of poverty and underdevelopment. Relief assistance following disasters, particularly in Africa, should be specifically linked to the restoration of stability and sustainable development.

69. The Human Development Report 1992 stressed the role of human resources in the development process and took particular note of the social and economic imbalances in the world. His delegation, which considered that human

development must be accorded the highest priority in development programmes during the next decade, was prepared to take part in any dialogue on that issue. It had reservations, however, regarding the political-freedom criteria used in the Report since some of the standards indicated could be manipulated for economic purposes.

70. Mr. EL-FERJANI (Observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that international circumstances had created economic and social difficulties which continued to hamper the efforts of the developing countries to eliminate poverty and underdevelopment. Conditions in those countries would deteriorate further as a result of the new economic order which unfortunately continued to be characterized by double standards, with a detrimental impact on international peace and security. To correct that situation would require efforts at all levels to reduce political tensions and to create a world in which all could work together peacefully.

71. His delegation strongly condemned policies which hampered the economic development of the developing countries. Policies such as embargos, trade barriers, economic blockades and the freezing of assets were designed to ensure the continued hegemony of the developed over the developing countries.

72. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya continued to be a target of such practices because of the efforts of a certain country which abused its economic and political power in open violation of the United Nations Charter. Those activities, if continued, would influence his country's obligations towards the international organizations.

73. The current economic situation called for major efforts at all levels to enable the developing countries to modernize their economic bases through such measures as increasing the improving food production. Stability could be achieved only through the participation of all on an equal footing. In particular it was necessary to reiterate the right of all countries to exercise their sovereignty and ownership of resources and control over all national activities.

74. His delegation urged the international community to adopt a firm position regarding the Arab Palestinian people who continued to be suppressed by the occupying Zionists, so that the country could be returned to its rightful owners.

75. His own country had achieved economic and social transformation thanks to development plans in the fields of agriculture, human resources, the integration of women, education, training and health. Despite the burden imposed by those programmes, it was trying to help the developing countries.

76. His Government was proud of its relationship with UNDP. Its country programme for the fifth cycle would cost $48 million, which he hoped the Governing Council would approve. It had paid up 70 per cent of its obligations and was in the process of paying the rest.

77. In connection with the Administrator's report, his delegation was in agreement with the new orientation of technical cooperation, though it must be reconsidered in the light of experience. The new programme approach and the increased emphasis on national execution were very important. Once that principle had been adopted, he hoped that the demarcation lines between all concerned would be clearly defined. His delegation also supported the new support cost structure in which coordination and decentralization, with greater powers being given to regional offices, were vital. Meetings of resident representatives were very useful, provided that the coordinating agencies of the recipient countries were also involved.

78. His delegation considered that healthy development should respect the environment. In that connection, he wished to announce that the International Commission for the Gaddafi Prize had decided that the Prize should be devoted to the creation of an international centre for the fight against the HIV/AIDS virus in Africa.

79. Continued emphasis must be placed on the integration of women. Regional programmes must be continued for the protection of intellectual property through cooperation with WIPO.

80. Mr. NGOUBEYOU (Cameroon), speaking on behalf of the African Group as well as his own delegation, said that Africa was currently experiencing the greatest changes since the 1960s as a consequence of the interaction of poverty and environmental degradation, aggravated by the economic crisis and by unemployment, social troubles, drought, famine and the AIDS pandemic.

81. Concerning the Human Development Report 1992, he shared the views expressed by the Group of 77 and the European Community on the linkages between human development and the environment and between human development and the functioning of international markets.

82. With regard to the operational activities of UNDP, it was clear that the programme approach would facilitate the more effective integration of the input of UNDP, and that of the specialized agencies and other donors, with national programmes. In terms of IPFs, however, the resources available for African development had decreased substantially in real terms from their fourth-cycle level, as a result of exchange-rate fluctuations and inflation, at a time when the need for resources to establish the African Common Market and offset the negative effects of structural adjustment programmes was at its greatest.

83. He therefore appealed to donors to increase their contributions substantially, particularly since the list of potential recipient countries had grown. He also appealed to the Administrator to release greater resources in support of African regional and intergovernmental projects.

84. The implementation of General Assembly resolution 46/151, particularly as it related to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, was of capital importance and the Governing Council should endorse it wholeheartedly.

85. The African countries noted that the programme cycles of the United Nations agencies would be harmonized under the new programme approach, with each agency concentrating its efforts in its own field of competence. The experience of Central America was very enlightening in that regard.

86. Exchanges of information between donors should be encouraged through mechanisms such as the NATCAPs, which had already led to better coordination of external aid.

87. On the issue of national execution, the trend had hitherto been to emphasize the role of United Nations executing agencies to the detriment of local expertise. He therefore welcomed the initiative by UNDP to reverse that trend, but feared that national execution would still be hampered by lack of particular skills or of essential experience. To remedy that situation, a training programme should be set up for personnel in the sectors where the needs were greatest. UNDP could contribute to such a programme by, for example, identifying experts who were nationals of Southern countries but resided in the North.

88. The solutions advocated by the Human Development Report 1992 with its new human development indicators, would require political will rather than additional funds, on the part of rich countries and were therefore realistic.

89. The African countries appreciated the cooperation of the International Trade Centre, since trade was one of the motors of development. They hoped that the agency would be revitalized and that WIPO development projects in Africa would also be supported.

90. The African countries deplored the persistent disparities between countries in terms of income, humar capital, economic growth rates and access to markets; they called for increased official development assistance and stressed that the deterioration in the terms of trade continued to be a serious obstacle to the implementation of policies and programmes for sustained human development. They supported the conclusions of the 1991 summit meeting of the Group of 15, particularly with regard to the need to recognize economic development and international cooperation, particularly through UNDP, as a principal concern of the international community.

91. Mr. KRALIK (Observer for the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic) said that, in the past, there had been many obstacles to positive change in the cumbersome structure of the United Nations. His delegation hoped that the proposed decentralization and organizational changes would make operational activities more productive and effective. The creation of a network of single-country United Nations offices could be cost-effective and lead to a proper sharing of responsibilities in coordinating the development process.

92. The programme approach, together with the impact of technical cooperation at the country level and national execution, would also emphasize the need to enhance national management capacity.

93. Some of the conclusions of the impressive Human Development Report 1992 were very disturbing, particularly in regard to the widening gap in global

economic disparities. It would seem, therefore, that the achievement of a new global compact by the year 2000 was very ambitious, and that some objectives were unrealistic. The annual human development reports constituted a useful UNDP contribution to the debate on development challenges and he hoped that the next issue would adequately reflect the new realities in Europe.

94. Consistent with the principle of universality, his delegation welcomed the inclusion among recipient countries of the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union. His country was ready to share its own transition experience and his Government, with the cooperation of European Community donors and the Canadian Government, was considering holding an ECE workshop on the experience of the transition process in the Central and Eastern European countries.

95. UNDP involvement in the transition process would not, however, be at the expense of the traditional recipient countries. According to the Administrator's report (table 3 of DP/1992/12/Add.2) Europe's share of UNDP expenditure had been a mere 1.4 per cent in 1991. UNDP assistance to those countries would be catalytic and should be very different from the type of assistance provided to developing countries. His own country had gained new experience relating to technical assistance in the less than two years since it had obtained net recipient status; over that period it had also become acquainted with difficult UNDP procedures for project proposals that had hampered the most effective use of UNDP information and intellectual resources in operational activities.

96. He agreed with the representative of Poland that a UNDP register of local and expatriate experts and consultants should be established. His delegation also recommended that UNDP representatives should be in daily direct operational contact with the national authorities responsible for the coordination of technical cooperation; that all information relating to national and regional development activities should be provided to interested national institutes with full financial transparency; that technical cooperation should be combined with attracting foreign investment capital as an integral part of UNDP's activity in the region; and that regional activities consistent with government priorities and steering committee recommendations should be initiated as soon as possible.

97. His delegation had some doubts regarding the new interregional programme for Europe and the role of regional programme managers, with particular reference to the major regional activity relating to the turn-around management programme, including its unclear financial implications for IPF countries. That programme required further discussion and clarification.

98. His delegation welcomed the decision to increase the approval authority of UNDP regional bureau directors and the establishment of the Division for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, which would improve mutual cooperation in the region.

99. His delegation which supported the location of the new UNDP regional division in Central Europe, also welcomed the German offer to locate United Nations organizations responsible for multilateral technical cooperation in Bonn.

100. In conclusion, he wished to emphasize his Government's continued support for UNDP activities for the benefit of the developing countries. It considered its UNDP net recipient status to be temporary only.

101. Mr. ADOUKI (Congo) took the Chair.

102. Mr. HAWES (Observer for Australia) said that the end of the cold war had produced a near-universal appreciation of the benefits of liberal economic policies and had recreated an international environment in which nations and global institutions could work together to deal with poverty, unequal development and the global environment.

103. Those changes had necessarily modified the context in which the United Nations operated. They demanded changes in the international, economic and social order in the direction of trade liberalization, democratization and sustainable development. They also demanded reforms within UNDP and the United Nations system generally. His Government believed that such reforms were of paramount importance for the overriding objective of human development.

104. His delegation's key reform objectives remained better prioritization of activities and the elimination of duplication. The pace of United Nations reforms had been encouraging, and important changes had been made in the way the Economic and Social Council was to operate. It was to be hoped that the high-level Economic and Social Council sessions devoted to single items would help to identify both gaps and duplications in the United Nations coverage of various issues.

105. Agencies needed to be focused upon their tasks. UNDP should remain committed to fulfilling its mandate in the areas of technical assistance, coordination, central financing and the monitoring of operational activities. It continued to provide a valuable avenue for policy dialogue between development partners, but it should not compete with other agencies or United Nations bodies.

106. UNDP had introduced much-needed changes in its programme management, notably in terms of national execution, women in development and moves to reduce the number of projects and adopt a more integrated programme approach. Those changes were to be applauded; further improvements in those areas would lead to even greater efficiency which, in turn, would engender greater confidence among the international community.

107. His Government regarded the annual Human Development Report as one of the most important contributions to the international development debate. As the latest Report noted, developing nations tended to be disadvantaged in the areas where trade was relatively free, because of their limitations in human and technological resources, and inhibited by restrictive trade practices in the areas where they were competitive.

108. The basic solution to the first problem lay in better technology transfer and, above all, human-resource development. Developing nations must take primary responsibility for their own human-resource development by channelling a greater proportion of their resources into basic human services and by

providing greater access for all to social-sector services. The donor community had also a major role to play. UNDP could make use of its comparative advantages - its neutrality and coordination networks - to further human-resource development by assisting the developing countries in their policy development, by funding human-development activities and by coordinating the activities of other donors in those areas.

109. His delegation commended UNDP on its work in those sectors, particularly in the South-East Asia and Pacific region. He wished to point out however, that, contrary to one of the Report's findings, Australia spent approximately 30 per cent of its bilateral assistance on the social sectors, including 20 per cent on training aid. His Government would continue to regard social-sector activities as a priority in its development-cooperation programmes.

110. It had been calculated that a 50 per cent reduction in the protection levels in the developed world would enable the developing countries to increase their exports by more than $50 billion. In that regard, it was noteworthy that extensive agricultural protectionism adversely affected many developing countries.

111. Trade liberalization was the most effective way of helping the developing world to help itself. That was evidenced by the South-East Asia region, where free trade, combined with sensible, liberal economic policies, had produced exceptional and sustained economic growth.

112. Delay in reaching agreement in the Uruguay Round negotiations ran counter to the well-being of developing and developed countries alike. The leaders of the largest economies must do everything possible to break the deadlock and deliver the benefits of reduced protection to everyone.

113. Sound domestic policies were the best way of dealing with the unsustainable use of resources. However, trade liberalization could also play an important role. The Human Development Report 1992 noted that one of the greatest threats to the environment was global poverty, which all too often resulted in the exploitation of marginal land and resource depletion. More open trade regimes fostered a more efficient allocation of resources and were thus generally associated with higher growth levels. Freer trade was also likely to be associated with greater transfers of technology, which could help to reduce pollution through the replacement of outdated technology.

114. Given the complementarities between growth, poverty alleviation and sustainable development, it was the task of developing and developed countries alike to improve economic policies and remove distortions which hastened environmental degradation.

115. UNDP's principal message in the human development reports to date was that the benefits of development must be distributed equitably. The best way to ensure sustainable development was by actively engaging all members of communities - particularly women - in the process. UNDP's steps in that direction ran parallel with those taken in Australia's bilateral development cooperation programme, particularly in terms of its greater focus on the role of women in development. However, UNDP still had some way to go along that

path and he urged it to move as speedily as possible to ensure that women-in-development criteria and gender issues became integral to all aspects of its programming.

116. His Government supported the developing countries' efforts to achieve levels of population growth consistent with their economic, social and physical resources. Population pressures encouraged the exploitation of scarce resources, to satisfy people's immediate needs, frequently with the result of land degradation, resource depletion and general environmental damage, as well as large-scale migration, unplanned urbanization and high infant and maternal mortality. The answer to those problems lay in population and family-planning programmes, the effectiveness of which was clearly determined by literacy levels and the extent to which they enjoyed the active support of the people.

117. With regard to the relationship between human development and political freedom, his Government had a flexible approach which focused case by case on what was likely to be most productive in advancing good governance and human rights objectives. While it looked favourably on projects and programmes which encouraged human rights in recipient countries, it did not adopt a prescriptive approach that linked the level of aid directly to such considerations. It believed that open, accountable Government tended to coincide with effective and equitable economic development.

118. His Government welcomed UNDP's efforts, through its recently instituted HIV and development programme, to highlight the developmental implications of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. AIDS claimed a disproportionately high percentage of young adults, a community's most productive members, and its potential developmental cost was massive. Despite the efforts of WHO and other international organizations to address the health aspects of the epidemic, much needed to be done to alert the world to its economic consequences and to assist the developing countries in dealing with the crisis. He commended the UNDP programme and hoped that it would continue to devote the fullest possible attention and resources to the issue.

119. All agencies must ensure that their human resources were highly skilled, motivated and alert to changing demands and priorities. His delegation welcomed the Administrator's commitment to improving UNDP's personnel policies, particularly his recognition that more had to be done to ensure that women enjoyed equal opportunities and greater representation within the Secretariat.

120. Mr. TIRONI (Observer for Chile) said that, from the outset, the new democratic Government of his country had made substantial efforts to achieve development with equity, in other words to combine economic development with social justice. His Government was also concerned to ensure equal opportunities for all and overcome poverty, in order to maintain a stable democratic system. It therefore fully supported the principles governing UNDP efforts.

121. It considered that international cooperation was an important complement to national efforts, but that it should never replace the responsibility of

the country and Government concerned to achieve sustainable and equitable development. The aim was a development in which women and young people would have equal opportunities, in which the environment would be protected and in which the most disadvantaged sections of the population would be enabled to overcome their marginality. His Government was grateful for the assistance given by various countries and multilateral organizations to Chile in its important transition to democracy.

122. In order to make international cooperation more effective and consistent with the country's true needs, his Government had set up a specialized body which had the task of working with the various international organizations and bilateral sources of cooperation with a view to matching opportunities to needs.

123. The peoples of the world, and those of Latin America in particular, were living in a period when they could regard the future with optimism. There was a consensus on the means of achieving objectives of priority concern to them. The time had thus come to take action and a more pragmatic approach was needed concerning the practical results to be achieved and periodic evaluations should be made, the chief instrument for which should be the UNDP annual report.

124. His delegation was pleased to note that the Human Development Report 1992 focused on the disparity between the rich countries and the poorer countries and devoted attention to ways to narrow that gap. Another significant aspect of the Report was its concern with environmental problems in relation to the quality of life. All in all, the ideas put forward in the Report should stimulate new thinking in the United Nations on development issues.

125. However, his delegation did not believe it appropriate to propose the convening of a world summit on human development, a matter that was within the competence of another United Nations organ. It therefore welcomed the statement by the UNDP Administration that it intended to amend the section of the Report dealing with the holding of such a summit and that future editions of the Report would contain no mention of the proposal.

126. His delegation was also concerned at the proposal to set up a development security council, which implied changes in the Economic and Social Council, since that question, too, was outside the competence of UNDP.

127. With regard to the administration of UNDP he welcomed the emphasis placed on the search for efficiency and decentralization and on more national execution of cooperation projects. Another aspect he wished to underline was the need to establish greater coordination of UNDP with other funds and organs of the United Nations system and with other donors. He believed that UNDP resident representatives could play an important role in promoting the necessary coordination among the various cooperation sources, in conjunction with the competent national bodies.

128. His delegation looked forward to the forthcoming discussion on Chile's fifth-cycle country programme and hoped that his country would, in the future,

receive greater resources from UNDP. His Government was concerned at the steady decline in the assistance given to his country and at the considerable reduction in the regional IPFs that concerned it.

129. Paragraph 16 of the Administrator's report on programme planning (DP/1992/22) reflected a clear reduction in the percentage of overall UNDP resources devoted to the Latin American countries. That would seem to indicate that UNDP did not accord priority to the process of democratic consolidation taking place in that region, although it recognized the region's vulnerability in view of the extreme poverty existing there. His Government sincerely hoped that UNDP would recognize the need for the region to receive greater assistance from multilateral sources.

130. Mr. BAHR (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that, while it was true that many regular programme pursuits of the specialized agencies could be drawn into more pragmatic applications to developing country problems, it was also true that many regular programme activities must continue to focus on events in the developed countries. For example, UNESCO could not help developing countries in the areas of oceanography, hydrology, ecology, educational technologies, mass communications or cultural heritage preservation if it did not simultaneously maintain the effective networks among developed countries from which evolved much of the experience and expertise which could then be offered to developing countries.

131. He was making that point with particular regard to the proposal that the integration of all multilateral technical cooperation at the country level could be achieved only through the mechanism of a single United Nations system "country programme" and through an integrated "United Nations team" under the authority of the resident coordinator.

132. The Governing Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly had been concerned with the issue of integrated country programming since 1969. General Assembly resolution 32/197 stipulated that the UNDP country programme document should serve as the frame of reference for all United Nations system programming and action at the country level. Some of the constraints preventing the realization of that goal were the overriding importance of structural adjustment programmes since 1983; the polycentric nature of the United Nations system; and difficulties in obtaining programme inputs from the many United Nations agencies which did not have extensive field networks.

133. General Assembly resolution 44/211 attempted to overcome those constraints by ordaining that all United Nations bodies should make programming advice rapidly available at the country level through decentralization, and that they should follow the lead of the resident coordinator in merging their country programming in an overall programme approach. Yet a vital question remained regarding the intrinsic relationship between, on the one hand, operational activities and, on the other, regular programme mandates and activities of the non-funding specialized agencies and the United Nations system as a whole.

134. Debate on that crucial issue between funding bodies and non-funding agencies was continuing. Effective complementarity between operational action and regular programme action at the country level must be achieved. A dual, split United Nations could not be the answer to the formidable development challenges and fundamental changes confronting all countries.

135. There were also some practical issues which needed to be addressed. Decentralization, for example, consisted in bringing technical/analytical staff in UNESCO's major fields of competence to the field level. In a few years, UNESCO would increase significantly the number of countries to which its representatives were assigned. Those UNESCO staff members would be mainly persons with a thorough knowledge of where the required expertise was to be found and how to make it operational. The broad range of highly specialized staff would be called in for limited periods of time, as and when they were needed. That would guarantee effective utilization of their scarce availability and increase the flexibility of their use.

136. Another practical issue was the fact that the resident coordinator's country team would, in most cases, be composed of all the funding agencies but of only three to four of the many specialized bodies of the United Nations system. Consequently, decentralization and the construction of country teams should not be perceived as offering an exclusively country-based solution to the challenge of integrated United Nations system programming. A mixture of country-based and external support would be needed.

137. Another fundamental issue was that of governance, which was of course for the Member States to decide. At a time when the concepts of central planning and bureaucratic authoritarianism had fallen into disrepute, and when UNDP itself was proclaiming the virtues of voluntarism and participatory development, the calls for tougher "lines-of-command" in setting the parameters of multilateral development strategies and policies at the country level were somewhat surprising.

138. Another practical issue was the "programme approach". As in the case of the closely-related new concept of a single United Nations country programme, UNDP must avoid the temptation to deal mainly with other funding sources. Other United Nations bodies, particularly non-funding agencies, should be brought fully into that major experiment. UNESCO found the programme approach to be challenging and workable, as demonstrated in innovative successful joint UNDP-UNESCO ventures with countries such as Benin, Mauritius, Viet Nam and Chad.

139. Noting the severe reduction in regional IPFs, he said that they could be restored to a more meaningful level through budgetary transfers. At a time when all parties were emphasizing the need to bring the regular programme actions of non-funding agencies into closer alliance with UNDP pursuits, there was no better meeting ground for such joint action than regional programmes and projects. With higher regional IPFs, there would be increased opportunities for agency/UNDP collaboration, to the benefit of many developing countries.

140. The success of the promising new ways of preparing and delivering technical assistance and operational activities depended largely on effective coordination and cooperation within the United Nations system and with Government and other national bodies at the country level. Several United Nations agencies and UNDP had joined their efforts over the past two years to work out practical details for the implementation of the new arrangements. Such inter-agency cooperation was expected to continue and, perhaps, to embrace monitoring of the functioning of the new approaches.

141. Mr. ABDENNEBI (Observer for Tunisia) said that the world had just witnessed a series of major upheavals which made it necessary for all to update their assessment of the situation of and prospects for the global economy and international economic cooperation. The world of ideological confrontation had given way to a world of East-West understanding and genuine interdependence among all nations in respect of problems relating to security, trade, financial resources, poverty, the environment and technology.

142. While giving rise to hopes of freedom in Central and Eastern Europe and of peace and security throughout the world, the changes that had taken place, far from resolving the world's economic problems, had accentuated the characteristics of the former situation by clearly establishing the magnitude of the problems and the urgent need for solutions.

143. Referring to the Human Development Report 1992, he said that his delegation agreed with a number of the analyses contained therein. Indeed, the measures for reducing external debt had not resolved or lightened the burden of all developing countries: medium-income countries were still awaiting solutions to their debt problems. The negative flow of resources continued to have considerable adverse effects on the balance-of-payments of developing countries and on their investment capacities.

144. Protectionism and the formation of powerful economic blocs constituted another source of great concern to the developing countries. The terms of trade, which were outside their power to control, continued to deteriorate.

145. While it was obvious that the developing countries themselves were primarily responsible for their economic growth and development, it was no less clear that national efforts alone would not suffice to achieve that goal, in view of the importance of exogenous factors. Consequently, the international community, and more precisely the industrialized countries, the multilateral financial institutions and the United Nations, also bore a responsibility in that regard.

146. In that connection, his delegation had taken due note of the proposals contained in the annual report of the Administrator for 1991 (DP/1992/12), paragraph 5 of which characterized the new orientation for technical cooperation.

147. A country such as Tunisia, which was trying to repay its debts while devoting sustained efforts to development, should not be penalized for having attained a high per capita income level but should be supported so that it could consolidate its achievements. His delegation thus appealed for

international solidarity and for the acceptance by all of the concept of co-development as the sole guarantee of international social peace and genuine security.

148. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Observer for Viet Nam) said that the experience and lessons learned by his Government through the implementation of three consecutive country programmes enabled it to support the new orientations for technical cooperation defined by UNDP. The third programme for 1986-1991 coincided with the implementation of Viet Nam's revival policy, particularly in the economic sphere, during which the change-over from a centrally planned to a market economy had been initiated, and which had required a change of direction towards a greater priority for UNDP's technical assistance.

149. UNDP's new orientations were clearly reflected in the design and formulation of Viet Nam's fourth country programme for the period 1992-1996. The programme approach, had proved its worth and made it possible to achieve results whose multiplier effect simultaneously enhanced Government responsibility and achieved harmonization and coordination with UNDP assistance-related activities by the various governmental bodies concerned.

150. Accordingly, national execution had become a necessity, but its success depended on the building of national management capacity which was determined by the importance given by the Government to cooperation with UNDP within its long-term strategy.

151. His delegation was also in favour of the coordination and harmonization of the operational development activities of the United Nations system, in which UNDP played the leading role and the responsibilities of the resident coordinator were increased. In that connection, he wished to stress the need to coordinate the emergency, technical and humanitarian assistance provided by the United Nations for countries liable to natural disasters, including assistance before, during and after such disasters.

152. Viet Nam was persistantly and vigorously implementing its policy of renewal, to ensure the well-being of its population. It attached great importance to the development of its human resources so as to ensure that the economic and social aspects of development were inseparably linked. It was committed to close cooperation with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the specialized agencies of the United Nations. Lastly, it endorsed the views expressed by the representative of the World Intellectual Property Organization emphasizing the considerable importance for the economic and technical development of the developing countries of technical cooperation programmes relating to intellectual property and the need for suitable UNDP assistance in that area.

153. Mr. MESTRE SARMIENTO (Observer for Colombia) said that his delegation was completely satisfied, at the operational level, with UNDP achievements, despite serious financial restrictions, in its region, including the recent approval of the fifth programme for Colombia. It also supported the cooperation programmes that focused on the essential question of international trade, in respect of which UNDP cooperated closely with UNCTAD; the two

organizations' joint efforts to improve trade practices in the developing countries and their initiative to establish technical assistance projects for the reinforcement of institutional capacity in the critical areas of trade negotiations and policy deserved special mention.

154. His delegation's satisfaction with UNDP at the operational level was in sharp contrast with its concern at the confused trends discernible at the policy level. There had been a positive attempt to implement General Assembly resolution 44/211, in which the Member States had adopted new policies regarding the operational development activities of the United Nations system, and UNDP had faced up to its responsibilities for the preparation of intergovernmental decisions on support costs, national execution and the programme approach, but there had also been an unfortunate incursion into areas alien to UNDPs mandate. The central issue in that respect was the Human Development Report 1992, and his delegation reiterated its support for the letter sent to the Administrator by the Group of 77 expressing the Group's unease at the distortion of institutional roles and at UNDP's repeated intrusion into areas more appropriate to the Commission on Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights.

155. Such developments threatened the valuable principles of universality and neutrality that characterized the technical cooperation provided by the United Nations. The equality of its Member States was the very basis of the existence of the United Nations and, if that tradition was disregarded, UNDP was in danger of losing its only genuine comparative advantage, namely, its harmonious political framework. Its technical skills were available elsewhere and its resources accounted for only 2 per cent of official development assistance. Neither recipient countries nor donors, therefore, had any interest in allowing the emergence of a form of conditionality that would destroy the political credibility of the United Nations.

156. In response to such well-intentioned but simplistic endeavours, the developing countries again drew attention to the vital concept of coordination, which would permit the urgently needed improvements to the existing order to be introduced by agreement and not imposed de facto.

157. In conclusion his delegation was convinced that UNDP's leadership depended not upon a spectacular publication but on the practical work of its staff-members in the developing world. It was confident that the Governing Council would guide UNDP towards the preservation and increase of its unique heritage: the provision of neutral and universal technical assistance to the developing countries.

158. Mr. OMAR (Observer for Egypt) commended the Human Development Report 1992, particularly chapters, 3, 4 and 5 thereof, which dealt with the international dimensions of the development process and ways and means to establish a more equitable international economic environment for the developing countries. However, while endorsing the need for a world summit on human development, he felt that priority should be accorded to the convening of the proposed World Summit on Social Development. He also felt that the suggested establishment of a development security council, within the

framework of the restructuring of the United Nations, might impede the endeavours that were being made to revitalize the Economic and Social Council.

159. In spite of the closer international relations that had been facilitated by the revolution in communications, the disparity in living standards among the various countries had never been greater and was preventing the establishment of a more equitable international economic order. States, as well as individuals, should enjoy freedom of choice in regard to development and should be able to determine what was appropriate and acceptable.

160. Although the five "clusters" of rights, referred to on page 29 of the Report, had met with unanimous approval, there were differences of opinion among the various societies as to the manner in which each of those clusters should be understood and applied. Accordingly, since each society had its own standard of values, it would be pointless to attempt to use the same yardstick to make comparisons between them.

161. While agreeing that there was an interrelationship between political freedom and development, as indicated on page 27 of the Report, the causative relationship between them required further study, since development was an ongoing process, whereas political freedom was only one factor influencing development.

162. In view of the successful results of the fourth country programme for Egypt, he requested the extension of that programme for a further year so that the fifth country programme would begin in 1993. That request was based on the following considerations: (i) the need for coordination between the country programme and the requirements and priorities of the fifth national plan; and (ii) the UNDP decision to adopt a programme approach rather than a project approach.

163. His Government, in cooperation with UNDP, was preparing the fifth country programme, which focused on ongoing sustainable development, management of human resources and economic and administrative development with a view to enhancing the project-execution capability of national institutions. He also stressed the importance of the regional programmes for the Arab States, especially the regional project for the development of industrial property systems, which was being funded by UNDP and executed by WIPO.

164. In conclusion, he was pleased to announce that his Government was prepared to act as host to the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 in view of the importance that it attached to population questions and their relationship with development and the environment. He hoped that the offer would be acceptable to the Member States.

165. Mr. OGADA (Observer for Kenya), having endorsed the statement by the Chairman of the African Group and the views expressed by the Group of 77 with respect to the Human Development Report 1992, said that the Administrator's annual report and address reflected the dissatisfaction of Member States with the manner in which economic and social development issues had hitherto been addressed within the United Nations system and by the international financial

institutions. Over the years, UNDP had played a highly commendable role characterized by farsightedness and a long-term approach. His delegation associated itself with the appreciation expressed by other delegations regarding the new approaches, and in particular the programme approach, that were designed to enhance UNDP's effectiveness and which, it was to be hoped, would assist the developing countries in achieving national objectives that took their own specificities into account.

166. His own country's situation made it particularly sensitive to the central role of human development in overall development, in which connection he mentioned the positive role played by UNDP through its Africa 2000 Network, whose support for ecologically designed community-based projects and efforts to improve education had increased Kenya's human-development output. His delegation also recognized the important role played by UNFPA, though the ability of many developing countries to implement population programmes was hampered by a lack of resources, and called for more funds to be made available to that Fund.

167. With regard to UNDP's regional programmes for Africa, he expressed his delegation's concern at the drastic reductions in the funds for those programmes and the hope that they would not be allowed to collapse before they became fully operational. His Government attached particular importance to the projects on locust control, drought monitoring and the African regional standardization organization.

168. His delegation's position regarding the environment and development was summarized by the Administrator's observation that, for developing countries, growth was not an option, it was an imperative. The issue was not one of limiting growth, but of achieving it without overburdening future generations. His delegation hoped that such an understanding would form the basis of the negotiations at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

169. Lastly, it was gratifying that the latest World Bank report focused on the alleviation of poverty, although the Bank had unfortunately taken rather a long time to discover the issue. For its part, UNDP had played a valuable role in alleviating poverty, but greater efforts were necessary. He urged that every effort should be made to bring the Uruguay Round negotiations to a successful conclusion and secure market access for the products of the developing countries.

170. Mr. ABADJIAN (Observer for Armenia) said that his delegation's presence at the thirty-ninth session of the Governing Council, so recently after his country's accession to independence and barely three months after it had become a Member State of the United Nations, was a major event.

171. His Government fully appreciated that the country's development depended first and foremost on its own efforts and on the deepening of democracy within its society. However, Armenia's progress would be more rapid if its efforts and aspirations were supported by the world community. Accordingly, his Government attached great importance to participation in UNDP projects which would allow Armenia to join with other countries in strengthening humanitarian and universal values.

172. He was gratified by the understanding shown at all levels of the problems faced by the CIS countries and the willingness to assist them to become active members of the international community.

173. His Government had recently applied to become a beneficiary member of UNDP. Armenia and the other CIS countries urgently needed that status in order to overcome the enormous difficulties they were facing and to establish a sound democratic system, failing which those difficulties would become chronic, with potentially harmful consequences not only for the countries themselves, but for the world as a whole. His delegation appreciated the valuable contribution that UNDP's long experience would allow it to make to the development of Armenia, and he was confident that it would not be long before his Government would be able to renounce beneficiary status on its own initiative and to cooperate in providing assistance to other countries.

174. His delegation also attached great importance to the establishment of an information and development office in Armenia, as his Government had no experience of cooperation with the United Nations system and the office would be a valuable intermediary.

The meeting rose at 6.50 p.m.